Agreement with Philippines for Rice Varieties

915. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the International Rice Research Institute, Philippines, have signed a work plan to produce germ plasm on 'Super Rice' for higher yield and 'Golden Rice' with Vitamin A; and

(b) if so, what are the salient conditions of the agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the International Rice Research Institute, Philippines, have signed a workplan on 15.2.2002. The workplan envisages to produce superior germ plasm for higher yield as well as nutritionally enriched for traits like pro-vitamin A—also called 'Golden Rice'. In the workplan there is programme under International Network for Genetic Evaluation of Rice (INGER) which will provide access to wide range of genetic materials developed globally. The breeding lines developed in India will also be tested to a wide range of test environments. The programme will help in identification of sources of resistance to major stresses, identification and utilization of ideal rice genotypes for different ecosystems. The superior rice germ plasm for higher yield and pro-vitamin-A rich rice developed in India rices at International Rice Research Institute will be evaluated and utilized in breeding programme for suitability under Indian conditions.

Agriculture Growth in H.P.

916. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the rate of growth targeted and achieved in agricultural sector in Himachal Pradesh during the last four years;

(b) the target set for the year 2001-2002 and the likely achievement thereof; and